



Center for Global
Engagement

Our Interwoven World

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION The mission of the Center for Global Engagement (CGE) is to broaden worldviews and promote global understanding for the JMU community by cultivating, facilitating, and supporting global engagement at home and abroad.

VISION The vision of CGE is to make global experiences—at home and abroad—attainable for all of the JMU community.

VALUES **Global Discovery** - Increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures, people, global systems and issues

Innovation - Being creative and open to new ideas, processes and solutions

Advocacy - Publicly supporting, recommending and persuading

Collaboration - Working together with diverse groups and individuals at home and abroad to maximize our strengths, resources, and effectiveness

Sustainability - Assuring the continued presence and active development of global education at James Madison University

Open-Mindedness - Being willing to consider differences and ideas



Center for Global
Engagement



jmu.edu/global



Center for Global Engagement

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome Message.....3

Celebrating Impact
Threads of Achievement.....4

Global Campus
Weaving Global Perspectives into JMU. . . . 16

Global Citizens
Developing Skills for an
Interwoven World.....34

Global Partnership
Building Strong and Reciprocal
Connections 50



The annual Study Abroad Fair, held in the Festival Ballroom, offers students the opportunity to connect with faculty from a wide range of disciplines and explore study, internship, and research opportunities in more than 50 countries.

Welcome Message

IN TODAY'S INTERCONNECTED ERA, the theme of this year's Annual Report, "Interwoven World", captures the essence of our work at the Center for Global Engagement at James Madison University.

Global education is, at its core, a collective endeavor. Each experience, partnership, conversation, and cultural exchange adds a unique thread to a larger tapestry, one that grows stronger, more resilient, and more vibrant with every connection we forge. This year, that tapestry expanded in remarkable ways.

Guided by the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan for Internationalization, CGE advanced its mission with purpose and momentum. Nearly 1,500 students studied abroad through revitalized programs and expanded partnerships,

University in London, and signing several new international agreements. Delegations from Thailand, India, China, and others further expanded our global reach and collaborative capacity.

Across the themes of Global Campus, Global Citizens, and Global Partnerships, the 2024–2025 academic year reflects JMU's unwavering commitment to preparing students for success in an interdependent world. The stories in this report highlight not only milestones and accomplishments but also the human connections that make global education transformative.



"Together, we are weaving a global community, a tapestry of many hands and many patterns, stitched with curiosity, compassion, and shared purpose. Thank you for enriching this interwoven world with every thread you contribute!" — JY ZHOU

while the opening of JMU's Passport Center removed a major barrier to global mobility for our campus and community. Rising numbers of international scholars and a small increase of international students further enriched our classrooms and research with diverse perspectives. Innovation propelled our progress. External grants and creative programs created new ways for students to engage globally, on campus, online, and abroad. The Faculty Associate Initiative strengthened curriculum internationalization, assessment, and support for international students across the university.

Our global partnerships continued to thrive. JMU deepened relationships across Europe, Asia, and Africa, launching a dual degree with Alamein International University in Egypt, expanding collaboration with Kyungdong University in South Korea, hosting students from Kingston

I am grateful to our students, faculty, staff, alumni, international partners, and the dedicated CGE team for contributing their vision, creativity, and leadership. Your collaboration helps us build a global community where every student can thrive and where meaningful connections transcend borders.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

JY Zhou, Associate Provost for International Initiatives and Executive Director, Center for Global Engagement



Celebrating

THREADS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Celebrating Impact highlights the moments, milestones, and recognitions that stand out in JMU's global tapestry. From prestigious grants and awards to long-standing program anniversaries, national forums, and innovative initiatives, these achievements represent threads of excellence woven through our collective work. Together, they reflect the creativity, leadership, and commitment of our students, faculty, staff, and partners, and signal JMU's growing impact and reputation on the global stage.

Impact

IN THIS SECTION

- JMU Hosts YSEALI Academic Fellows..... 6
- Semester in Florence and Semester in Spain Celebrate 40th Anniversaries 8
- Holland and Yates Visit the Center 9
- Provost Award for Excellence in Global Education10
- Study Abroad Awards: Celebrating Innovation, Inspiration, and Achievement..... 11
- AIEA Thematic Forum on Global Operations12
- Faculty Associates Program Launched to Advance Global Learning at JMU.....13
- Immersive Global Learning: Nursing Students Step into the Future of Dementia Care14



JMU Hosts YSEALI Academic Fellows

IN APRIL 2024, the Center for Global Engagement received the grant from the U.S. Department of State to host Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Academic Fellowship program with a focus on Society and Governance.

Housed in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, this intensive fellowship brought leaders aged 18-25 to JMU to engage in five weeks of academic study, leadership training, service learning, and cultural activities.

The YSEALI program is the U.S. government's signature initiative to strengthen leadership and networking in Southeast Asia. It provides emerging leaders from eleven countries in the region a way to develop their skills and expand professional relationships with their peers. JMU's program featured academic sessions with faculty on topics such as policymaking, public administration, and accountability. Fellows engaged in service projects with local organizations, attended a Rockingham County Board of



Supervisors meeting, and traveled to Richmond to meet state representatives in the capitol, and visited Boston, Massachusetts to learn the rich history of U.S. society and culture.



The fellowship concluded in Washington, D.C. where participants connected with peers from across the country and shared the projects they planned to implement in their home communities. Hosting the YSEALI program underscored JMU's commitment to building global partnerships, strengthening democratic values, and preparing the next generation of leaders for shared challenges.



Dr. Margaret Mulrooney leads the YSEALI fellows on a guided campus tour, sharing insights about JMU's institutional history.



"The topics were tailored to the Southeast Asian context and resonated with my lived experience and professional work in the region. It gave me new insights and frameworks that I believe will be valuable for both my academic development and my ongoing work in humanitarian fields."

— INDONESIAI YSEALI FELLOW



Semester in Florence and Semester in Spain Celebrate 40th Anniversaries

DURING 2024 HOMECOMING WEEKEND, the Center for Global Engagement celebrated the 40th anniversaries of two of JMU's long-running study abroad programs: Semester in Spain and Semester in Florence.

Since their founding in the 1980s, these programs have welcomed more than 5,000 students, offering immersive academic and cultural experiences that remain central to JMU's global engagement mission.

Semester in Spain, founded by Dr. Carmenza Kline, continues to provide full Spanish immersion and general education opportunities collaborating with the University of Salamanca, complemented by travel to historic cities across Spain and Portugal. Semester in Florence, established by Dr. Kay Arthur, engages students across disciplines while housed at the historic Palazzo Capponi, with excursions to cultural landmarks throughout Italy.



From left to right: Semester in Spain Director Dr. Tomás Regalado-López, Study Abroad Director Katie Sensabaugh, Semester in London Director Dr. Amy Paugh, and Semester in Florence Director Dr. Chris Blake.

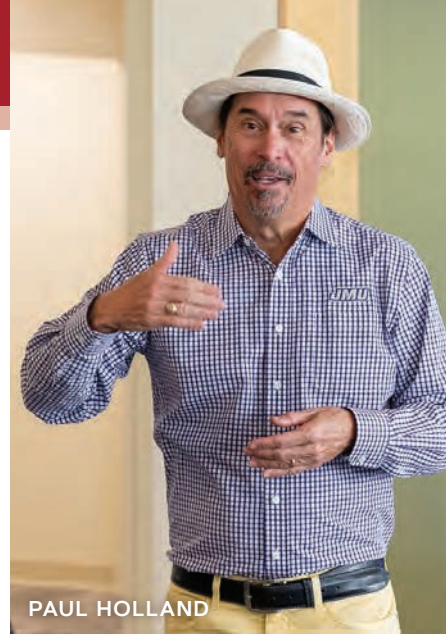


Holland and Yates Visit the Center

ONE YEAR AFTER THE OFFICIAL NAMING of Holland Yates Hall, Paul Holland and Linda Yates returned to JMU to see the impact of their generosity firsthand.

As part of their gift, the couple set aside funds to provide financial support for students to participate in life-changing study abroad programs.

During their visit to the Center for Global Engagement, Holland and Yates met with students who have directly benefited from these opportunities. Among them was N'Deye Sock, a senior SMAD major, who shared how multiple study abroad experiences shaped her academic and personal growth. Other students echoed similar stories, highlighting how the scholarships helped make global learning accessible and transformative.



PAUL HOLLAND



LINDA YATES



The visit showcased the power of philanthropy to spark opportunity, elevate potential, and strengthen our community. By reducing financial barriers, the Holland and Yates gift continues to open doors for JMU students to expand their worldviews, engage with new cultures, and carry global perspectives back to campus and their future careers.

"This was my second time meeting Holland and Yates, and they remain so approachable and friendly. You can tell they have a true passion for education and study abroad." – N'Deye Sock



Provost Award for Excellence in Global Education

THE PROVOST AWARD for Excellence in Global Education was presented to Dr. Ed Brantmeier, Director of Global Engagement Research, Special Projects in the College of Education.

With a career spanning decades, Dr. Brantmeier has dedicated himself to creating transformative international and cross-cultural learning opportunities for students.

From his early inspirations in rural Wisconsin to his work as a Fulbright Nehru scholar in India, Dr. Brantmeier has consistently advanced the idea that meaningful global engagement can occur both abroad and within the U.S. His leadership includes serving as editor of the *Journal of Peace Education*, developing accessible cross-cultural programs in Northern Ireland, and championing peace education as a replacement for conflict and violence.

“There are different ways to serve your country... Some of us choose the power of the book and the power of education. We go in unarmed to learn *from* and *with* other people in foreign places. That’s what I’ve chosen as my path.”

Looking ahead, Dr. Brantmeier is exploring the emerging field of regenerative leadership, which integrates sustainability and intercultural understanding into educational practice. His lifelong commitment to peace, sustainability, and student-centered global learning exemplifies the values of this award and continues to shape a more engaged and interconnected world.



DR. ED BRANTMEIER

Study Abroad Awards: Celebrating Innovation, Inspiration, and Achievement

EACH YEAR, the Center for Global Engagement recognizes faculty who demonstrate excellence and innovation in leading Study Abroad programs.

Faculty are nominated by their peers, and awards are announced at the Fall Directors Meeting.

The Anaza Benjamin Distinguished Director of the Year Award honors directors who exemplify exceptional dedication, mentorship, and resiliency. The 2024 recipient is Dr. Chris Blake.

Catalyst for Transformation Award recognizes directors who design high-impact, experiential programs. Dr. David Owusu-Ansah is this year's winner.

The Enhancing Community through Holistic Opportunities (ECHO) Award celebrates directors who integrate community engagement into education abroad, and was awarded to Dr. Melissa Alemán and Dr. Carlos Alemán.

These awards highlight the transformative work of JMU faculty in advancing global learning and fostering meaningful student connections through innovative study abroad programming.



(above, left) **Dr. David Owusu-Ansah** accepts the **Director of the Year Award**. (above, right) **Dr. Carlos Alemán** accepts the **ECHO Award**.

AIEA Thematic Forum on Global Operations

IN APRIL 2025, James Madison University was awarded a grant from the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) to host one of its Thematic Forums.

JMU's forum — *Developing Globally Engaged Institutions: Strategies for Navigating Global Operations* — convened senior international education leaders, scholars, and practitioners to share best practices and explore innovative strategies for advancing global operations in higher education.



Sessions addressed topics such as global operations frameworks, compliance, risk management, international recruitment, and strategic planning for global initiatives. With expert speakers, collaborative workshops, and networking opportunities, the event positioned JMU as a hub for dialogue on the future of globally engaged institutions.

By bringing together thought leaders from across the field, the forum strengthened JMU's role as a convener of global conversation and underscored the university's commitment to advancing internationalization in higher education.



"The AIEA Forum was marvelous in all regards: interactive design, expert speakers, great spaces, and clear communication on logistics. I regularly attend AIEA Thematic Forums, and the JMU team 'raised the bar,' setting a high standard of excellence. I was also pleased to see so many JMU staff members in attendance, which highlighted the University's impressive commitment to global learning and engagement." – FORUM PARTICIPANT

Faculty Associates Initiative Launched to Advance Global Learning at JMU



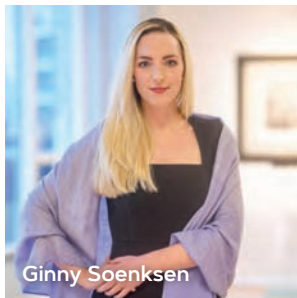
Diana Galarreta-Aima



Corey Hickerson



Shin Ji Kang



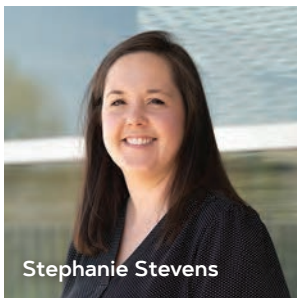
Ginny Soenksen



Ayami Makino



Felix Wang



Stephanie Stevens



Yi Edward Yang

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT IS COMMITTED to the principle that global learning can and should be integrated into every JMU student's experience and that faculty partnerships are the driving force that turn this vision into reality.

Through teaching, research, and service, faculty play a central role in advancing this mission. To support and expand their efforts, CGE launched a Faculty Associate Initiative to engage faculty in leading projects that strengthen global learning and engagement on campus and beyond.

In 2024-2025, CGE Faculty Associates collaborated with colleagues across and beyond JMU to explore and expand global engagement opportunities for JMU.

Dr. Diana Galarreta-Aima (World Languages & Cultures) reviewed and revised the Global Campus Toolkit, a key resource for faculty engaging with international students in their classrooms.

Dr. Corey Hickerson (School of Communication Studies) assessed faculty participation in study abroad, exploring both the benefits and challenges of leading study abroad programs.

Dr. Shin Ji Kang (Early, Elementary & Reading Education) promoted and integrated Global Virtual Exchange (GVE) and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) across disciplines at JMU.

Ginny Soenksen (College of Visual and Performing Arts) and **Dr. Ayami Makino** (World Languages & Cultures) collaborated to strengthen study abroad partnerships with universities in Japan.

Stephanie Stevens (Office of Planning, Analytics and Institutional Research) works on data visualization projects for CGE to map JMU's international footprint..

Dr. Felix Wang (Honors College) explored innovative ways to integrate COIL into JMU's study abroad programming.

Dr. Yi Edward Yang (Political Science) designed strategies to encourage international student participation in the JMU Washington Semester program.

Together, these faculty bring creativity, expertise, and dedication to advancing JMU's global mission. Their projects not only enhance opportunities for students and faculty but also deepen the university's connections with communities and partners around the world.

Immersive Global Learning: Nursing Students Step into the Future of Dementia Care

THIS YEAR, JMU introduced an extraordinary new opportunity for nursing students to learn and care across cultures.

In collaboration with Prince of Songkla University (PSU) in Thailand, JMU reimaged a traditional nursing learning experience by transforming it into a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)-based virtual exchange. This model opens doors for rich global conversations and learning from diverse perspectives and caregiving practices.

The university's commitment to this innovation was further recognized when the project was selected for the 2025 Madison Trust showcase, JMU's premier forum for presenting bold, high-impact ideas to philanthropic investors. Following the team's

presentation, the project received \$12,200 in donor support, providing crucial resources to expand VR access, strengthen cross-cultural programming, and broaden participation among students and family caregivers. This investment affirms the significance of advancing global health education through technology-enhanced, accessible learning models.

The program's signature feature is its use of virtual reality (VR) dementia-care simulations, allowing students to experience the world through the eyes of individuals living with cognitive decline. These immersive experiences offer something rarely possible in a classroom: the emotional insight and empathy needed to understand the lived realities of patients and caregivers.

Students at JMU and PSU engaged in shared online learning, comparing cultural norms, discussing caregiving traditions, and building meaningful connections across continents with real-time AI translation support. These dialogues helped students see dementia care not as a single model, but as



a holistic system shaped by family structures, community expectations, and cultural values. Students then applied this learning locally by leading dementia-care workshops for family caregivers in Harrisonburg and across the Commonwealth, reinforcing their own skills while strengthening community health.

By blending technology, cultural exchange, and community engagement, this innovative COIL program equips JMU nursing students with the compassion, cultural humility, and global awareness needed to serve diverse populations, showcasing how global engagement empowers students to thrive in an interwoven world.

Team members are Dr. Hui Zhao, Assistant Professor of Nursing; Dr. Jamie Robinson, Associate Director for Undergraduate Programs, Associate Professor of Nursing; and Dr. JY Zhou, Associate Provost for International Initiatives and Executive Director, CGE.





Global

WEAVING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES INTO JMU

JMU's Global Campus weaves global engagement into everyday campus life, across classrooms, traditions, and student experiences. CGE fosters an environment where international and domestic students learn with and from one another. From International Week and the Passport Center to shared meals, student leadership initiatives, and cross-campus advisory councils, global perspectives are interlaced throughout the JMU experience. Together, these efforts strengthen a campus tapestry rooted in community, curiosity, and global understanding.

Campus

IN THIS SECTION

Advisory Board Established to Coordinate Global Programming.	18
LINKers: Students Leaders	
Ice Cream Social: So Cool!	19
International Student and Scholar Services	20
International Student Countries of Origin	21
International Student and Faculty Demographics	22
A Delicious Night of Ramen for International Students	23
Passport Center Opens at JMU	24
International Week 2024.....	26
I-Week Student Photo Contest.....	28
Sharing an Annual Thanksgiving Meal.....	32
Madison International Continues its Tradition of Cross-Cultural Integration	33



Advisory Board Established to Coordinate Global Programming

DURING THE FALL '24 SEMESTER, the Center for Global Engagement launched its inaugural Advisory Board to strengthen communication and collaboration across JMU's colleges, units, and divisions.

The Board plays a vital role in advancing CGE's mission of broadening worldviews and promoting global understanding by serving as a bridge between CGE and the wider university community.

Board members represent diverse academic and administrative areas of JMU, ensuring that global engagement priorities and initiatives are shared across the institution. Acting as liaisons, they bring forward the perspectives and needs of their colleges and divisions while also communicating CGE programs and opportunities back to their colleagues.

Beyond information-sharing, the Advisory Board provides strategic advice and guidance on JMU's internationalization efforts. It offers a platform for discussing emerging trends in higher education, exchanging ideas about global learning, research, and identifying opportunities to bolster JMU's reputation as a global leader.

By creating the CGE Advisory Board, CGE has taken an important step toward embedding global engagement more fully into JMU, ensuring that international perspectives remain central to the student, faculty, and staff experience.

"The Advisory Council helps us weave global engagement across JMU, bringing together people, priorities, and ideas for greater collective impact." – JY ZHOU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CGE



LINKers: Students Leaders

SUPPORTING JMU'S INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

AT THE HEART of JMU's international student experience are the **LINKers: Leaders for International Networking and Knowledge**.

This team of globally-minded student leaders welcome new international Dukes to JMU and support their transition to campus life in the U.S.

Best known for their work during International Student Orientation, LINKers lead sessions on U.S. campus culture, assist with shopping trips, and give campus tours. Beyond orientation, they help during ISSS programming, advise the CGE on student needs, and serve as role models and peer mentors throughout the year.



Through this work, LINKers not only strengthen the sense of community among international students but also grow as leaders themselves.

Ice Cream Social: So Cool!

TO KICK OFF the academic year, International Student and Scholar Services hosted its annual Ice Cream Social to welcome new and returning international students to JMU. Although the event was moved indoors due to weather, the students were still able to connect, share experiences, and build community with one another.



"What a cool event!"



International Student and Scholar Services

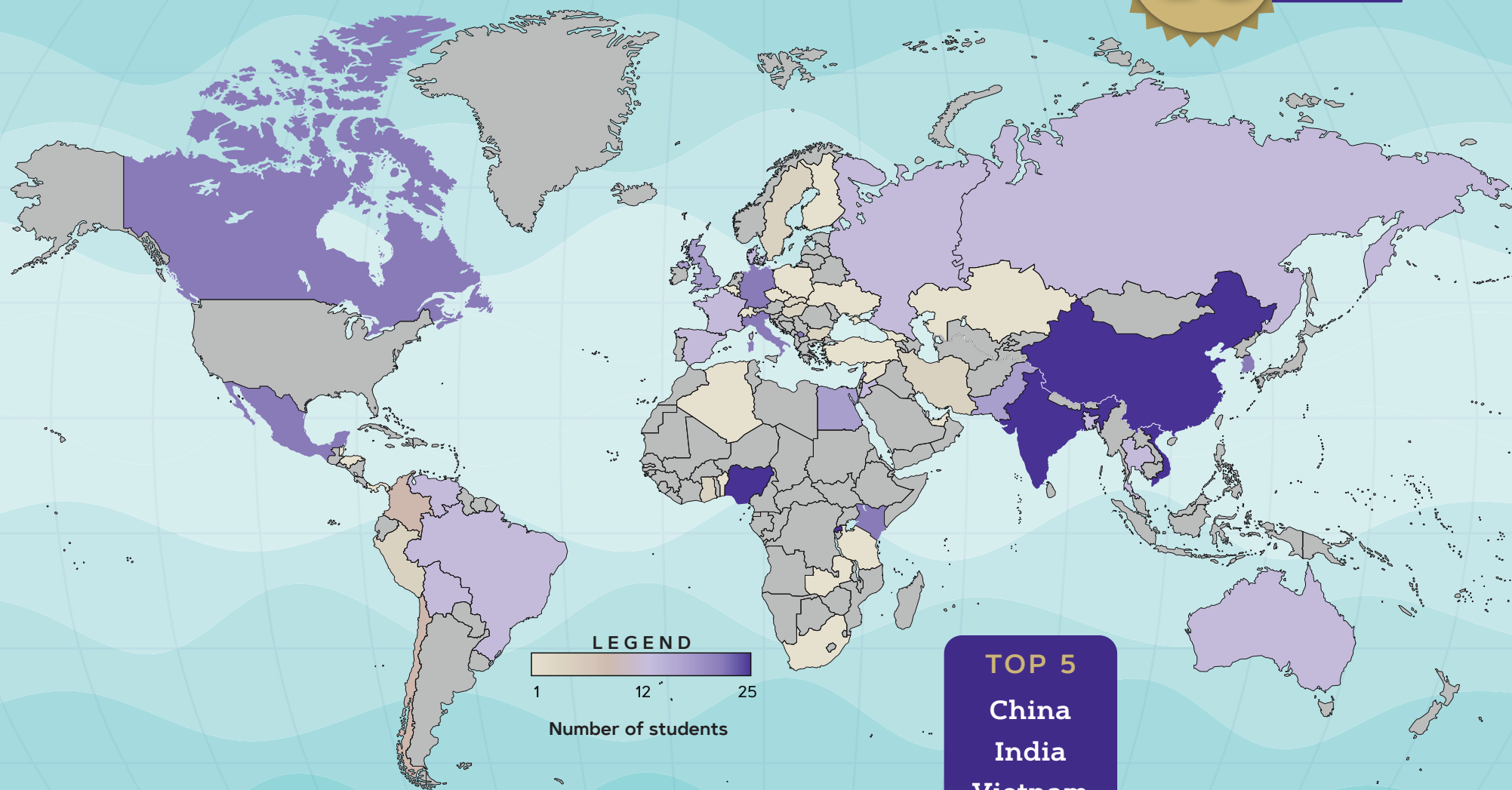
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES (ISSS) strives to create a safe and supportive environment where international students and scholars feel welcomed. We provide a range of educational and social programming while maintaining compliance with immigration regulations. For our international students, exchange students and scholars, we issue immigration documents to apply for their visas to enter the United States, provide an orientation program, offer social and educational programming throughout the year, support career development, provide support as they navigate life at JMU, and provide immigration advising. For departments, we work collaboratively on hosting international visitors and scholars, providing immigration support for employment-based petitions.



International Student Countries of Origin

73

Countries
represented



TOP 5
China
India
Vietnam
Nigeria
Rwanda

International Student and Scholar Demographics

International Students

COMPRISE

1.12%

of the total
JMU student body

International Undergraduates

0.73% of all undergraduates
155 out of 21,139 total enrollment

Top 5 Undergraduate Majors

- Computer Information Systems
- Computer Science
- Finance
- International Business
- Management

International Graduate Students

5.75% of all graduate students
102 out of 1,774 total enrollment

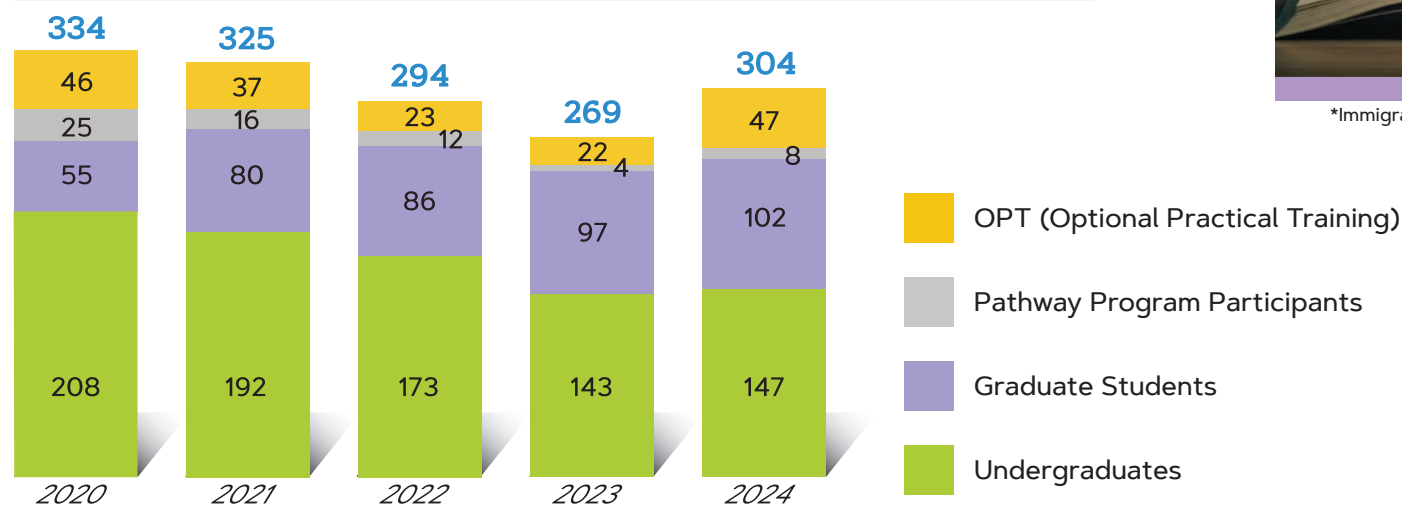
Top 5 Graduate Majors

- Communications & Advocacy (MA)
- Musical Arts (DMA)
- Public Administration (MPA)
- Sport & Recreation Leadership (MS)
- Strategic Leadership (PhD)



*Immigration status as of Aug. 2024

International Student Population Since 2020



Based on Fall 2024 data provided and prepared by
International Student and Scholar Services

A Delicious Night of Ramen for International Students

TO FOSTER CONNECTION and sense of belonging among international students, the International Student and Scholar Services team hosted a make-your-own ramen night in the CGE Lounge.

The ramen bar, prepared by ISSS staff, featured a variety of proteins, vegetables, and toppings for students to experiment with. Beyond the food, the event provided a relaxed space for students to build friendships, share different experiences, and feel at home on campus. Simple gatherings like this reflect our support of international students and strengthening their sense of community at JMU.



The event provided a relaxed space for students to build friendships, share different experiences, and feel at home on campus.



“A passport is more than just a travel document—
it’s a symbol of freedom, opportunity, and the memories
created through international experiences.”

— BOB KOLVOORD, PROVOST



Passport Center Opens at JMU

IN JANUARY, the Center for Global Engagement officially opened the Passport Center, a full-service acceptance facility providing low-cost passport services to JMU and the greater Harrisonburg community.

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Provost Bob Kolvoord reflected on the passport as more than just a travel document—it is a symbol of freedom, opportunity, and the memories created through international experiences.



"The passport I received through the Center for Global Engagement has opened countless opportunities for me. I now have the opportunity to explore the world freely and experience new cultures firsthand."

-LUKE ELLIS



By making passport services more affordable and accessible, the center lowers one of the most common barriers to studying or traveling abroad. Since its grand opening in January, the Passport Center has continued to operate twice a week and has processed over 150 applications so far. It is already empowering students, faculty, staff, and community members to take the first step toward global engagement.



International Week 2024

CELEBRATING JMU'S GLOBAL COMMUNITY

The Center for Global Engagement's International Week brought the campus community together for a vibrant celebration of global learning and cultural exchange. "I-week" featured a series of events designed to engage students, faculty, and community members in the richness of international experiences.



I-Week opened with a keynote address by documentary filmmaker Shalini Kantayya, known for her work

on social media, technology, and the environment. Kantayya's presentation, which included an excerpt from her 2022 film *TikTok, Boom.*, set the stage for reflection on the global challenges and opportunities shaping our interconnected world. There was also a screening of her documentary *Coded Bias* about how discrimination is baked into AI facial recognition algorithms.

Shalini Kantayya
Keynote



International Bazaar

On Wednesday, the **International Bazaar at Warner Commons** offered a lively, colorful marketplace. International vendors, student groups, and community artisans showcased foods, crafts, and handmade goods, demonstrating that global engagement extends beyond travel and into local communities.



Study Abroad Fair



Thursday brought the **Study Abroad Fair** to the Festival Grand Ballroom. With over 90 programs across 40 countries represented, students spoke directly with faculty directors, program leaders, and returned students.



International Variety Show

The week concluded with the **International Variety Show** at Taylor

Down Under, where international students and faculty showcased traditional dance, music, and fashion from their home countries. The fun and energetic performances celebrated cultural pride, creating a festive and educational experience for all attendees.



I-Week Student Photo Contest: Nature

THE ANNUAL I-WEEK PHOTO CONTEST recognized student creativity in capturing cultural experiences and travel over the past year. The grand prize went to James Sejas for his photograph, *Uyuni Dream*, selected by campus-wide popular vote.



Branta canadensis (Canada Goose)
Emily Allen
Vancouver, Canada
Finalist



Nature's Canvas
Nikitas Karousos
Interlaken, Switzerland
Finalist

Photo was taken on a family trip to the Uyuni Salt Flats in the southern part of Bolivia.



Uyuni Dream
James Sejas
Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia
★ **Grand Prize Winner**

I-Week Student Photo Contest: People



Ocean's Embrace
Folajimi Kalejaye
Virginia Beach, VA
Finalist

UMUNYARWANDAKAZI
Tony KTK
Rwanda
Finalist



In rural Ghana, a Kente worker hangs up his recently completed fabric.

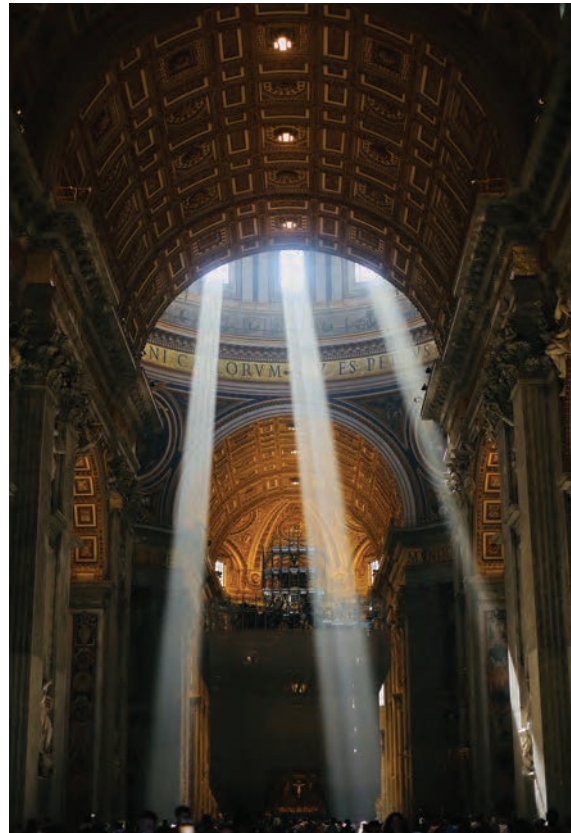


Kente Maker
Landon Shackelford
Ghana
Category Winner



Golden Buddhist Temple - 金佛寺
Katherine Jendzurski
Xishuangbanna, China
Finalist

Sunbeams pierce St. Peter's Basilica
Miles Wildermuth
Vatican City
Category Winner



"The timing could not have been better. Approaching the entrance of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, three pillars of sunlight immediately caught the attention of me and my classmate. Walking through the illuminated Basilica was one of the most profound experiences of my life, both as a photographer and a human being. I hope that viewers can experience a fraction of what I felt that day by looking at this photo."



Roman Cistern
Christopher Timothy
Istanbul, Turkey
Finalist

Miscellaneous



In the Palm of Your Hand
Abby Lobasso
Trinity College Library, Ireland
Finalist



Cheeky Little Boardwalk
Daniel Dunleavy
Deerfield Beach, FL
Finalist



Sharing an Annual Thanksgiving Meal

IN NOVEMBER, International Student and Scholar Services hosted its annual Thanksgiving Celebration for the JMU international community, a long-standing tradition.

The event introduces international students to the customs of this U.S. holiday while highlighting the values of gratitude, fellowship, and cultural exchange.

The celebration featured a traditional Thanksgiving meal, complete with turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, and pumpkin pie, much of it prepared by CGE staff and volunteers. More than one hundred students, families, and friends gathered to share the meal, highlighting the importance of community during a busy semester.

Sharing U.S. holidays and traditions creates a distinctive experience that highlights the values of generosity and unity that resonate across cultures. By bringing together JMU's diverse international

community, the Thanksgiving celebration fosters a welcoming environment where students and their families from around the world can feel at home at JMU.



It is a JMU tradition to show gratitude, build friendship, and appreciate cultural exchange.

Madison International Continues its Tradition of Making Cross-cultural Connections



"I used to think that culture was how people are, and now I see culture as something that impacts how people are."

—MADISON INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANT

THE MADISON INTERNATIONAL (MI) residential learning community brings together a diverse group of international and U.S. students to learn with, from, and about each other through engaging experiential activities.

In the 2024–2025 academic year, MI welcomed 13 students from nine countries across five continents, creating a vibrant and globally connected living-learning environment.

At the core of the MI experience are individual and interpersonal well-being, cultural understanding through dialogue, and ethical reasoning focused on local and global issues. In addition to two academic courses, MI students participated in a variety of community-building and experiential learning activities, including: a team challenge course, a group hike with other international students, service learning project, an International Thanksgiving celebration, and mini-travel experiences in small groups to explore JMU, Harrisonburg, and the surrounding community. These activities fostered meaningful connections, cultural exchange, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.





Global

DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR AN INTERWOVEN WORLD

Global citizenship at JMU is shaped through experience, reflection, and meaningful engagement across borders. This section highlights how students build the skills and confidence to navigate cultural differences, collaborate globally, and lead with purpose. Through study abroad stories, international conferences, artistic expression, and virtual internships, students move from awareness to action, connecting global perspectives to real-world challenges. These experiences prepare graduates who are adaptable, culturally fluent, and ready to contribute wherever their paths lead.

Citizens

IN THIS SECTION

Peace Corps Prep at JMU.....	36
Washington Semester Program: Expanding Opportunities for International Students	37
Study Abroad.....	38
Study Abroad Destinations 2024-25.....	39
Study Abroad Program Statistics 2024-25.....	40
Stories from Abroad: Sharing Global Adventures.....	41
Global Ambassadors Hone Their Skills.....	42
Two International Students Receive Recognition from The Graduate School.....	43
Strengthening Global Networks: JMU in Indonesia.....	43
Board of Visitors Learns About Internships Abroad.....	44
Students Present at International Conference in Hiroshima.....	45
JMU's Kozlova Signs with French Pro Teamr.....	46
International Student Artist Paints Murals of Belonging on Campus.....	47
Global Career Accelerator:Empowering Global Citizens with Innovative Career Exploration	48

Peace Corps Prep at JMU

THE PEACE CORPS PREP PROGRAM equips students with the skills and experiences needed to pursue globally oriented service and professional opportunities.

Emphasizing leadership, service, and cross-cultural understanding, the program provides a strong foundation for those interested in Peace Corps service, while also preparing participants for careers in education, nonprofit work, and international engagement.



Through a combination of academic coursework and hands-on experiences, students develop competencies in four key areas: sector-specific academic knowledge, foreign language proficiency, intercultural competence, and professional and leadership development. Upon completion, students receive a Certificate of Completion from the Peace Corps, signifying their readiness to engage with communities worldwide.

“My Peace Corps service in Mauritania in western Africa was the hardest job I’ve ever loved. It allowed me to serve with purpose, and also learn from communities with extraordinary strength and generous hospitality.”

— DR. KEN RUTHERFORD, Professor of Political Science



Washington Semester Program: Expanding Opportunities for International Students

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY'S WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM offers students from all majors the chance to combine academic coursework with hands-on internship experiences in Washington, D.C., gaining professional skills while exploring government, nonprofit, and think tank environments.

As part of his work as a CGE Faculty Associate, Washington Semester Director Dr. Yi Edward Yang reconnected with JMU alumnus Adan Toledo, originally from



Mexico, who participated in the program in Fall 2014. He wanted to better understand the value of the Washington Semester to international students once they join the workforce.

According to Toledo, for international students, the program provides a unique opportunity to engage with U.S. policy and professional culture early in their academic careers. "It was a great opportunity to see how the U.S. government works from the inside, and I learned so much from the experience."



Through his internship on Capitol Hill, he gained experience in policy research, constituent services, and congressional operations. While navigating cultural and language barriers, Adan built confidence and developed a professional network that supported future internships and career opportunities.

The Washington Semester Program equips international students with

practical experience, intercultural competence, and professional growth, providing a strong foundation for future academic and career success. For students like Adan, it proved to be a transformative step in connecting classroom learning with real-world experience.



"The Washington Semester Program was essential for me. It helped me build a professional network and gain experience while I was still a student, which made it much easier to find internships later."

- ADAN TOLEDO



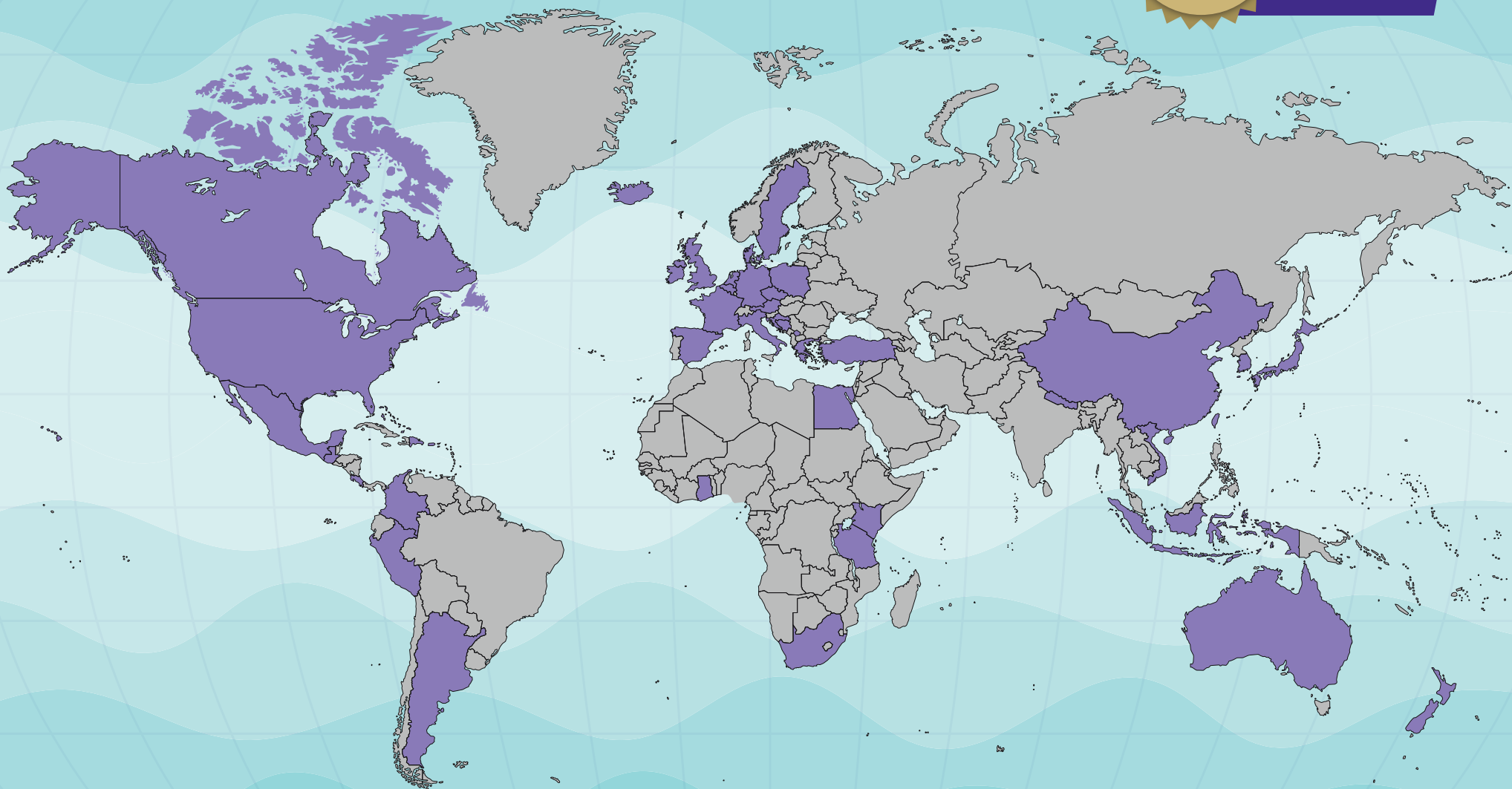
Study Abroad

THE STUDY ABROAD TEAM supports faculty and students to achieve their educational goals on a global level. By working together with more than 150 talented faculty from all academic colleges, the Study Abroad team aims to create transformational international learning experiences for students. In '24-'25 more than 80 programs spanning 50 countries across the world and provided students the opportunity to choose from over 200 courses taught abroad.



Study Abroad Destinations 2024-25

**Countries
welcomed JMU
Study Abroad
Students**

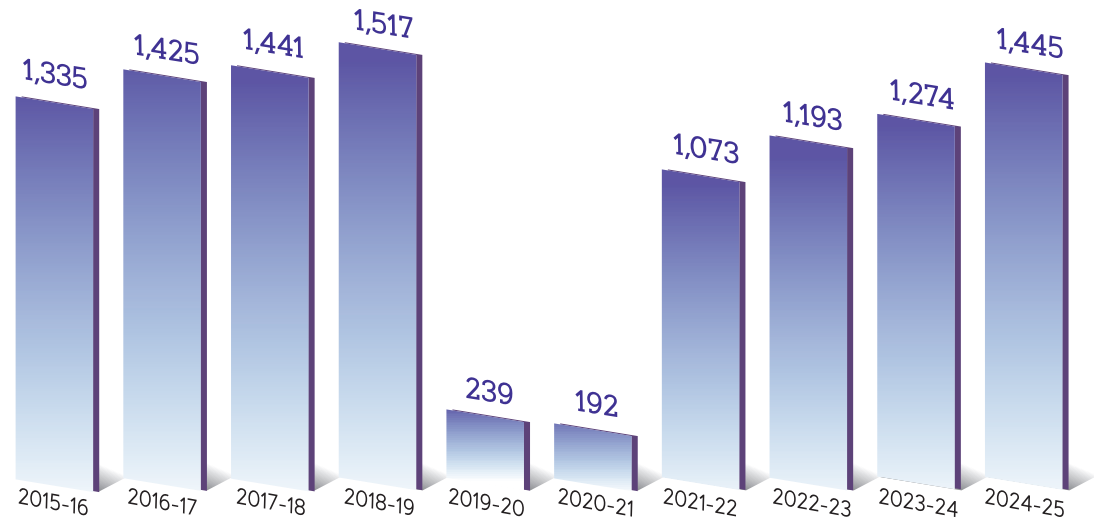


Study Abroad Program Statistics 2024-25

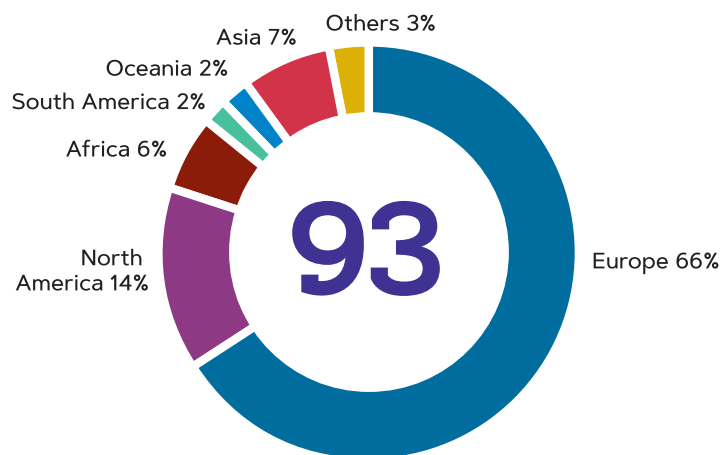
10 Most Popular Study Abroad Majors

Media Arts and Design	98
Psychology	95
Health Sciences	73
Communication Studies	70
Nursing	63
Marketing	61
Political Science	61
Computer Info Systems	55
Finance	48
International Affairs	46

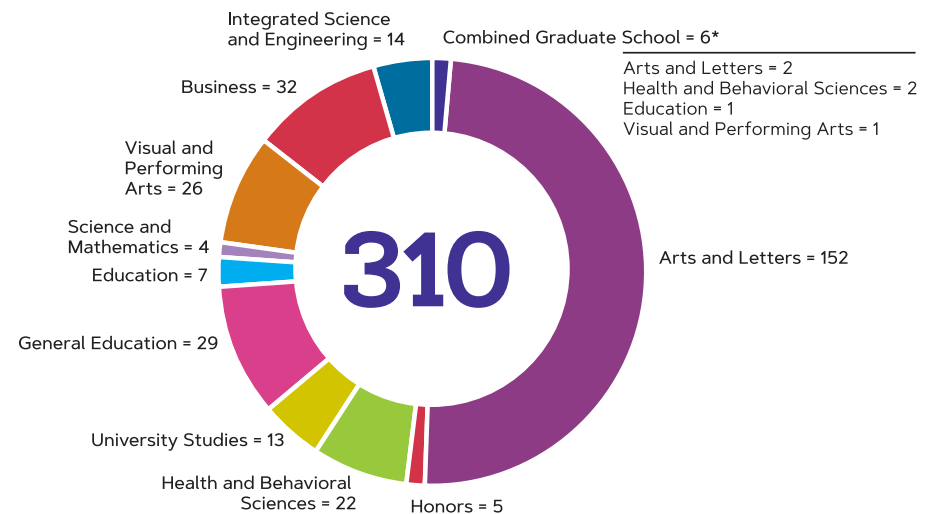
Study Abroad Annual Participation



Number of JMU Study Abroad Programs by Region



Study Abroad Courses Offered by College



Stories from Abroad: Sharing Global Adventures

JMU STUDENTS GATHERED at Taylor Down Under for Stories from Abroad, an engaging event hosted by the Center for Global Engagement's Study Abroad unit. Returning study abroad students shared firsthand accounts of their international experiences, offering both entertaining and insightful perspectives on life abroad.



Stories ranged from humorous mishaps, like arriving at the wrong airport in Belgium or losing a passport in Japan, to unexpected cultural encounters, such as discovering a familial home in Guatemala, or a run-in with a “magic fish” in Thailand. Each tale highlighted the unpredictable and transformative nature of study abroad, showing how challenges abroad can lead to personal growth, cultural understanding, and lasting memories.



The event provided students with an opportunity to hear from peers about the joys and adventures of living and learning in another country, reinforcing the value of global experiences and the diverse opportunities available through JMU study abroad programs.

“Stories from Abroad was a great way to experience lots of different perspectives on Study Abroad and the many opportunities these JMU programs offer. It was also a great opportunity for students to share the similarities and differences of their Study Abroad trips with each other and the audience.”

— MADISON BARKER, Co-Emcee, Stories from Abroad

Global Ambassadors Hone Their Skills

GLOBAL AMBASSADORS are JMU students who have participated in study abroad and are passionate about sharing their experiences. Before the fall semester began, they completed a week-long training at CGE to develop the skills needed to tell their stories effectively and serve as knowledgeable advocates for peers considering studying abroad.



As part of their training, each ambassador presented a story about a transformative experience from their time abroad. The stories contained moments of personal growth, unique cultural connections, and unexpected discoveries.



The presentations offered an inspiring glimpse into how study abroad shapes students' worldviews and strengthens their confidence, adaptability, and global awareness. From overcoming language barriers to building deeply personal connections with host families, the ambassadors' stories highlighted the life-changing impact of international education.

As student leaders, the Global Ambassadors continue to promote study abroad across campus, helping fellow Dukes prepare for their own global journeys while keeping the spirit of international learning alive at JMU.



The Ambassadors shared stories of personal growth, cultural connection, and unexpected discoveries.

Two International Students Receive Recognition from The Graduate School

ON FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2024, Leonita Morina and Folajimi Kalejaye received recognition at the Graduate School's annual Awards Reception.

Morina was recognized for an outstanding thesis on Innovation, and Kalejaye won the Graduate Student Association's Impact Award. CGE would like to congratulate these students for their accomplishments.



Strengthening Global Networks: JMU in Indonesia

PARAHYANGAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (UNPAR) in Indonesia hosted an international student conference in collaboration with the **International Network of Universities (INU)**.

The conference seeks to foster a global learning environment by bringing together students from around the world to explore topical global issues.

The 2025 conference, held from January 20–25 in Bandung and Jakarta, centered on the theme “Innovating, Shaping, and Pioneering the Future of Learning: Empowering Youth Voices.” The program featured lectures, workshops, and activities focused on creating more innovative, inclusive, and sustainable education for all.

JMU was represented by workshop leaders Dr. Kristofor Wiley and Dr. Katya Koubek, both from the College of Education's Educational Foundations & Exceptionalities program. They were joined by JMU student participants Anna Bashore, Catalina Calles, Lana Cruz, and Gracie Stewart.



Expanding Global Career Opportunities with Internships Abroad

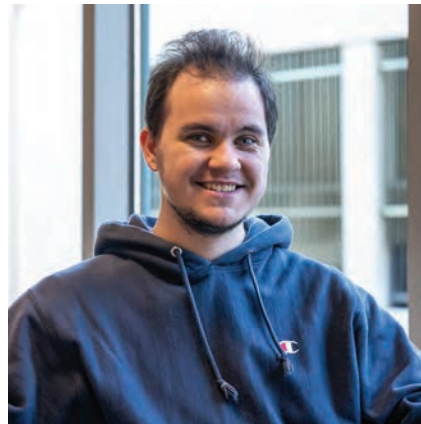
THE JMU BOARD OF VISITORS learned of the transformative impact of JMU's Internships Abroad program during a presentation at their November 2024 meeting.

Led by Dr. JY Zhou, Executive Director of Center for Global Engagement, alongside student panelists Miles Haynes, Devon Petrecca, Sofia Rubi, and Nais Ryan, the presentation highlighted the growing role of experiential learning in shaping students' global career readiness.

Since 2009, JMU's internships abroad have evolved from small placements in Ghana and Kenya to 12 hands-on, work-based programs in 10

CGE emphasized how these opportunities prepare students to thrive in a global workforce. Their internship experience helps them develop adaptability, problem-solving, and intercultural communication skills. Looking ahead, JMU aims to increase participation of students completing internships abroad as part of JMU's plan to expand partnerships with multinational companies, increase scholarships, and collaborate with industry leaders.

Through these initiatives, JMU continues to position itself as a national leader in global experiential learning, empowering students to turn international experience into lifelong professional and personal growth.



countries, including Germany, Spain, Tanzania, and New Zealand. More than 300 students representing 42 majors have participated since the pandemic, gaining real-world experience, professional skills, and cross-cultural competencies that enhance their employability and global perspectives.

From left to right: **Miles Haynes, International Affairs Major, Internship in New Zealand. Devon Petrecca, Economics major, internship in Germany. Nais Ryan, History major, internship in the UK. Sofia Rubi, Biology major, internship in Ghana.**

JMU Students Engage in Global Dialogue for Peace in Hiroshima

IN AUGUST 2024, more than 50 students from 11 member universities of the International Network of Universities (INU) gathered in Hiroshima, Japan, for the International Student Seminar for Global Citizenship and Peace, centered on the theme “World Peace and Political Justice.”

With speakers and facilitators from universities across the USA, Spain, UK, Germany, Ukraine, Indonesia, Sweden, and Japan, participants engaged in workshops, keynote talks, cultural activities, and the United Nations General Assembly Role Play, where they practiced diplomacy and negotiation by drafting and passing a resolution on “Financing for Peace-Building.”

JMU’s delegation made a meaningful impact at the seminar through both student engagement and faculty leadership. Students Arushi Chauhan, Elsa McKenney, and Osvaldo Perez actively participated in workshops, intercultural discussions, and the UN role play. Representing JMU’s faculty, Dr. Hakseon Lee, Professor of Political Science, contributed scholarly insight as a featured speaker with his workshop, “Liberal Peace and Its Critics,” which challenged participants to critically examine the philosophical and practical limits of liberal approaches to peace.

The seminar coincided with Hiroshima’s Peace Memorial Ceremony on August 6, where students heard from atomic bombing survivor Ms. Keiko Ogura, honored with an INU Certificate of Recognition for her peace advocacy. Through academic dialogue, cultural exchange, and shared reflection, the program fostered empathy, global awareness, and lifelong connections among students committed to peace and international understanding.



“I have learned more about myself and what it means to be a global citizen.

Coming from the US we do not learn enough about other cultures. The friendships I’ve cultivated and the conversations I’ve had with Japanese and international students have taught me more about other types of people in just 10 days than the entirety of my 16 years of traditional schooling.”

—ELSA MCKENNEY



JMU's Kozlova Signs with French Pro Team

KSENIIA KOZLOVA, a standout international student-athlete has signed to play professionally with Basket Lattes Montpellier Association (BLMA) in France's top-tier La Boulangère Wonderligue for the 2025–26 season.

A native of Moscow, Russia, Kozlova made an indelible mark on James Madison University women's basketball, helping lead the Dukes to a program-record 30 wins in the 2024–25 season. A 2025 All-Sun Belt First Team selection, she finished her JMU career averaging 11.6 points and 6.6 rebounds per game and became the 34th Duke in program history to score over 1,000 points.

Kozlova's journey from JMU to the professional stage in France highlights how international students enrich the campus community

and demonstrate the global reach of JMU's commitment to student success.

Kozlova's journey highlights how international students enrich the campus community and demonstrate the global reach of JMU's commitment to student success.



Action photos by JMU Sports

International Student Artist Paints Murals of Belonging on Campus

ACROSS THE JMU CAMPUS, vibrant new murals invite students to reflect on community and connection.

The murals are the work of Ver Ikeseh, a MFA graduate student in JMU's School of Art, Design, and Art History. Originally from Nigeria, Ikeseh collaborated with the Office of Residence Life and the Office of Student Life to create ten large-scale murals in spaces including The Union, Festival Conference Center, and several residence halls.

Exploring themes of belonging and family, Ikeseh's colorful figures and bold compositions ask viewers to consider what it means to be part of a shared community. "People from different backgrounds, beliefs, and religions — I'm trying to see how everybody could belong to a family," he explained. His experiences living across Africa, Europe, and the United States deeply

Ikeseh's colorful figures and bold compositions ask viewers to consider what it means to be part of a shared community.

influence his work, infusing each mural with a global perspective and a sense of inclusion.

Ikeseh's murals are accessible to students every day, brightening communal spaces and sparking conversation. Ver exemplifies the creative and cultural contributions international students bring to JMU's campus.

Photos by Sixuan Wu | The Breeze



Global Career Accelerator: Empowering Global Citizens with Innovative Career Exploration

THE GLOBAL CAREER ACCELERATOR (GCA) is one of JMU's innovative and forward-looking pathways for cultivating students as global citizens who can think across cultures, collaborate with purpose, and work with confidence in an interconnected world.

Through virtual programs interacting with global industry partners, students gain real-world experience while practicing the intercultural communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills that define today's global workforce.



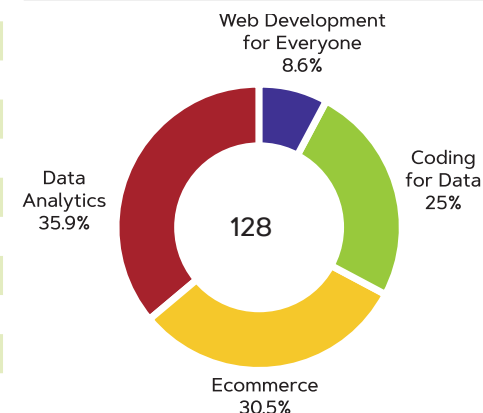
Fully virtual and open to all majors, the GCA expands access to international learning by removing traditional barriers to mobility and offering a flexible, high-impact model for developing global perspectives. In 2024-25, 128 students participated, reporting a strong sense of community, mentorship, and meaningful cross-cultural engagement throughout the experience.

By uniting innovation with career exploration, the Global Career Accelerator prepares JMU students to become adaptable, culturally fluent global citizens, ready to contribute, lead, and thrive in a world where collaboration transcends borders.

Top 10 Majors of Student Participants

- Computer Information Systems
- Computer Science
- Psychology
- Marketing
- Individualized Study
- Finance
- Communications Studies
- Media Arts & Design
- Business Management
- Information Technology

Breakdown of Tracks



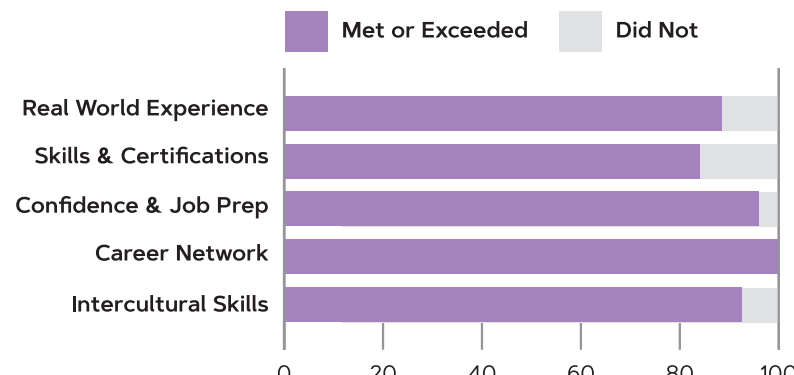
Student Feedback

"I'm so grateful for this experience! All the team leads and instructors made this so worthwhile and fostered such a good community of learners." — Senior SMAD Major

Overall Rating: **8.9/10**

Support Team: **9.7/10**

Met or Exceeded Expectations







Global

BUILDING STRONG CONNECTIONS

Global partnerships are vital threads in JMU's global tapestry. Through reciprocal collaborations with universities, organizations, and governments worldwide, JMU expands academic opportunity, advances innovation, and deepens cultural exchange. From dual-degree programs and international delegations to participation in global networks, these relationships are built on trust, shared purpose, and long-term vision, strengthening the JMU community and extending its impact far beyond campus.

Partnership

IN THIS SECTION

Global Learning Partnerships 52

Zambia's Ambassador Visits JMU

JMU International Student Receives IIE
Emergency Student Fund Grant..... 53

New Partnership Begun with Egypt's
Alamein International University 54

Celebrating a Growing Partnership with
KyungDong University..... 56

Building Global Skills with Kingston University (UK)..... 58

Exploring Career and Funding
Opportunities in Europe with Euraxess

JMU Expands Global Partnerships with
Kimyo International University 60

CGE hosts delegation from Christ University in India.....61



Global Learning and Partnerships

THE GLOBAL LEARNING AND PARTNERSHIPS (GLP) unit believes that every JMU student should have the opportunity to develop global perspectives throughout their academic journey. We collaborate extensively with faculty and staff to support curriculum internationalization and to develop globally-focused teaching, learning, and research initiatives. We also work with international institutions and organizations to provide a variety of resources and programs that go beyond interactions with international students or study abroad experiences. By partnering with international institutions and organizations, we also explore and create innovative opportunities that benefit the entire JMU community.



Zambia's Ambassador Visits JMU

IN OCTOBER 2024, JMU had the honor of welcoming Dr. Chibamba Kanyama, Zambia's Ambassador to the United States, to campus in celebration of the country's 60th independence anniversary.

Hosted by the Department of Political Science, the Ambassador delivered a talk on Zambia's democracy and economic development, highlighting the nation's past challenges and future opportunities.



Dr. Chibamba Kanyama

Director of the Center for Global Engagement, welcomed the Ambassador for a discussion with international graduate students and staff, highlighting the role of international students in enriching the JMU community.

The event, co-sponsored by the African, African American, and Diaspora (AAAD) Studies Center, offered students and faculty the unique opportunity to engage directly with a senior diplomat. With active involvement from both students and faculty, the visit served not only as a celebration of Zambia's independence but also as a reflection of JMU's role as a convener of global dialogue.

welcome
mwaaisene mukwai

JMU International Student Receives IIE Emergency Student Fund Grant



A JMU INTERNATIONAL STUDENT was awarded a grant from the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Emergency Student Fund (ESF), a program that provides financial assistance to international students in the U.S. whose education has been disrupted by war, natural disaster, or other crises.

Through this grant, the student was able to continue taking classes at JMU despite unexpected hardships. The support covered essential living expenses and ensured that their academic progress was not interrupted.



Photo collage from IIE Facebook page.

New Partnership Begun with Alamein International University

IN JULY 2024, JMU welcomed a delegation from Alamein International University (AIU) and officials from the Egyptian embassy to campus, to begin a new global partnerships.

During the visit, the two institutions signed an agreement establishing an official exchange program that will launch in 2025.

This collaboration creates a dual-degree program, enabling students to complete coursework at both universities while immersing themselves in diverse cultural and academic environments. It also opens opportunities for Egyptian universities and research institutions to host U.S. Fulbright Scholars, fostering teaching innovation and collaborative research.



The partnership builds on more than two years of collaboration between JMU faculty and AIU leadership, beginning with early visits in 2022 and continuing through mutual exchanges of ideas, curriculum, and expertise. With shared strengths in hands-on learning, research, and industry connections, the alliance promises to enrich academic opportunities for students and faculty alike.

By expanding opportunities for study abroad, co-teaching, research, and joint grant applications, this new partnership represents JMU's commitment to cultivating global collaboration and preparing students for success.





"The new partnership benefits students and faculty by opening doors to various opportunities, such as studying abroad, co-teaching, co-advising capstone projects, advising research projects, and applying for grants." - SAMY EL-TAWAB

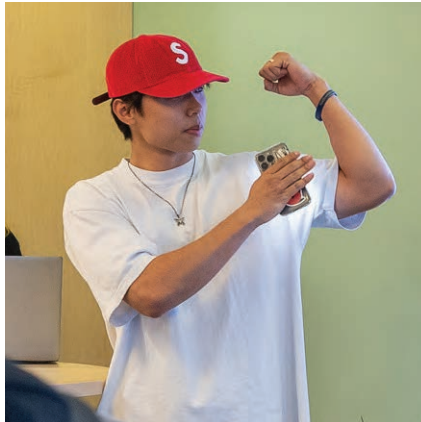


Left: AIU President, Essam Elkord; Dean of Computer Science and Engineering, Moustafa ElNainay; and Dr. Heba Saad, Director, Egyptian Cultural and Educational Bureau, Egyptian Embassy in Washington, D.C. tour JMU and meet with stakeholders.

Celebrating a Growing Partnership with KyungDong University

IN THE FALL OF '24 the Center for Global Engagement (CGE) and KyungDong University (KDU) in South Korea began a dynamic new partnership through an ongoing series of English language and cultural exchange programs.

To date, five cohorts of approximately 30 KDU students each visited JMU for immersive, six-week experiences combining English language study, travel, and cultural exploration.



Led by KDU President Dr. Sung-Yong Chun, the program offers students a firsthand look at American university life and the Shenandoah Valley region. Each cohort participates in a variety of local and regional excursions, including visits to Luray Caverns, the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, and a full-day trip to Washington, D.C. Beyond the

classroom, students engage with the campus community by attending JMU events and sporting activities, gaining an authentic sense of campus spirit and student life.

These meaningful experiences reflect JMU's ongoing commitment to fostering mutual understanding and global engagement. Through this growing partnership, both institutions are providing transformative opportunities that build intercultural competence, lifelong connections, and a deeper appreciation for the shared value of education across cultures.





“Since 2024, Kyungdong University has partnered with JMU’s Center for Global Engagement to provide KDU students with an immersive English language and U.S. cultural program grounded in shared educational values. Through this collaboration, approximately 150 students have developed English proficiency and global competencies while engaging in meaningful cross-cultural learning. Kyungdong University envisions this partnership as a long-term strategic alliance and looks forward to expanding academic exchange and collaborative initiatives with JMU to advance the missions of both institutions.”

— SUNG YONG CHUN, Ed.D.,
President, Kyungdong University, South Korea



JMU Provost Bob Kolvoord watches the KDU students’ final presentations, and presents them with Certificates of Completion.



Building Global Skills with Kingston University (UK)

IN JUNE 2025, JMU welcomed a group of 20 students from Kingston University in London for a program focused on global career readiness.

The students explored future workplace skills while immersing themselves in American culture during the 4-week program. Their goal was to compare U.S. and U.K. work cultures and examine the impacts of emerging technologies in a globalized world. Their experience combined classroom



**Kingston
University**
London



activities with visits to companies and worksites across Virginia, giving the group both academic and professional insights. The group also enjoyed excursions to Washington, D.C., Shenandoah National Park, Downtown Harrisonburg, and Virginia Beach. The program concluded with student presentations to JMU faculty and staff, showcasing the knowledge and perspectives gained during their program.





The students explored future workplace skills while immersing themselves in American culture during the 4-week program.



Exploring Career and Funding Opportunities in Europe with Euraxess

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT hosted Dr. Derya Buyuktanir Karacan, a researcher and professor at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, for a special presentation on career and funding opportunities for scholars in Europe.

In her role as regional coordinator for EURAXESS North America, Dr. Buyuktanir Karacan helps connect researchers in the U.S. and Canada with institutions across the European Research Area.

The event focused on graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty researchers with valuable insights into the process of applying for academic and research positions in Europe. Dr. Buyuktanir Karacan outlined the variety of grant programs, mobility opportunities, and collaboration networks available through EURAXESS, emphasizing how these pathways strengthen transatlantic research partnerships.



Dr. Karacan meets with Dr. JY Zhou, Executive Director of CGE, and Dr. Linda Thomas, Dean of the Graduate School



JMU Expands Global Partnerships with Kimyo International University

IN NOVEMBER 2024, JMU formalized a new international partnership with Kimyo International University (KIU) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The signing ceremony brought together Provost Bob Kolvoord, Dean of the College of Education Mark L'Esperance, and College of Education faculty members Dr. Ed Brantmeier and Dr. Shin Ji Kang, along with Rod Powell, Vice Rector of KIU.

The new partnership establishes a foundation for academic exchange, faculty collaboration, and shared research initiatives between JMU and KIU. Through this agreement, both universities aim to promote innovative approaches to education and intercultural learning. The collaboration reflects JMU's broader commitment to building mutually beneficial global partnerships.



CGE hosts delegation from Christ University in India

IN JANUARY 2024, the Center for Global Engagement welcomed a delegation from Christ University in Bangalore, India, to explore opportunities for academic collaboration and partnership.



During their visit, representatives from both institutions engaged in productive discussions about joint research initiatives, short-term student exchanges, and the potential to co-host an international conference focused on emerging trends in technology and innovation.

“My visit to JMU was an enriching academic experience that reflected JMU’s strong commitment to modern education. We are happy and proud to establish an academic partnership with JMU.”

DR. PARAMESWARAN SUBRAMANIAN, Associate Dean, CHRIST University



CHRIST
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
BANGALORE | DELHI NCR | PUNE

This annual report is a production of the communications office of the James Madison University Center for Global Engagement.

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